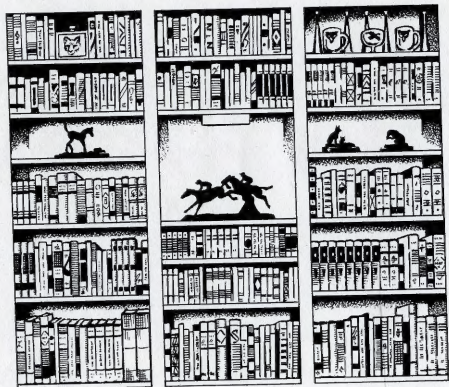


HUNTING ON KENAI
PENINSULA

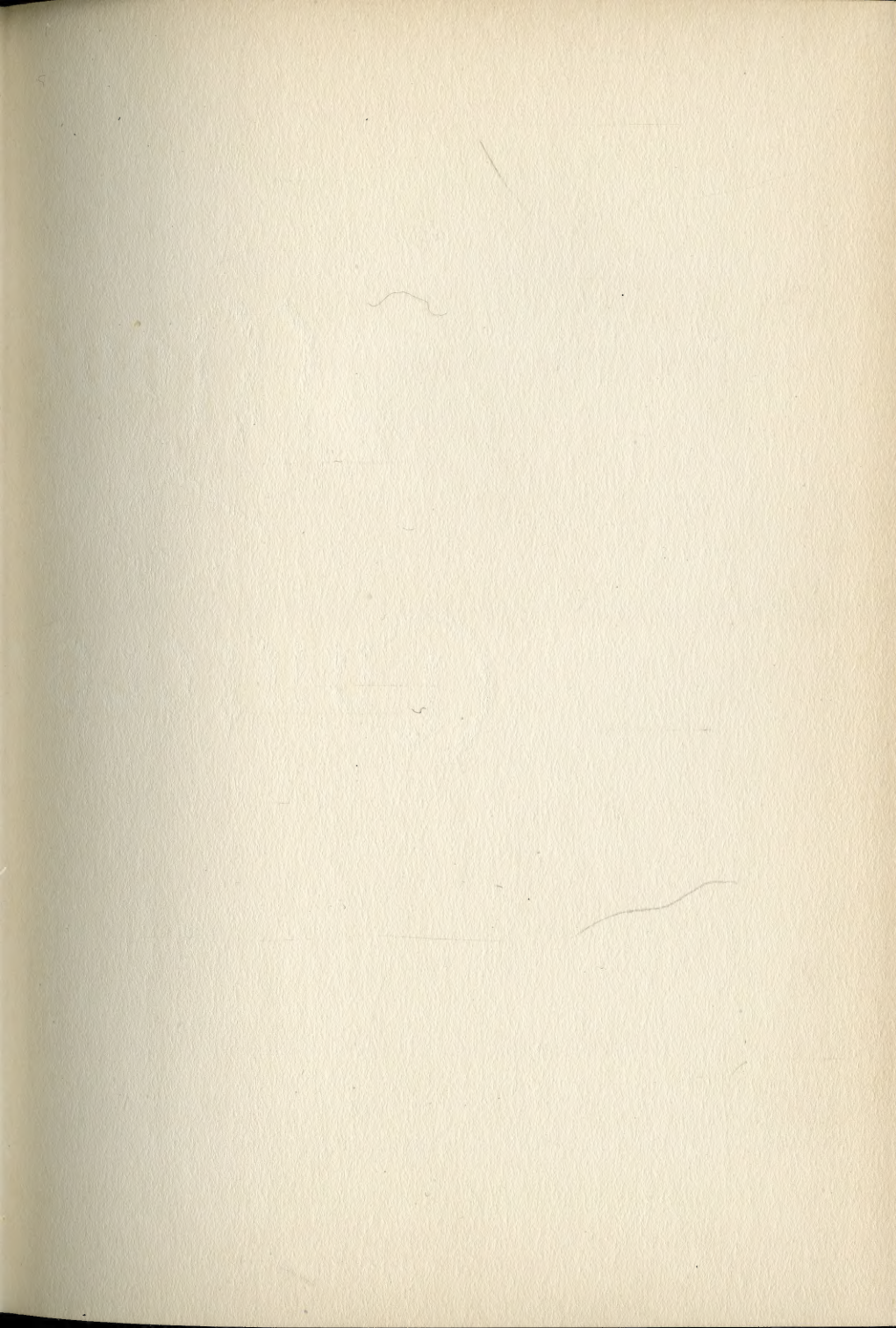


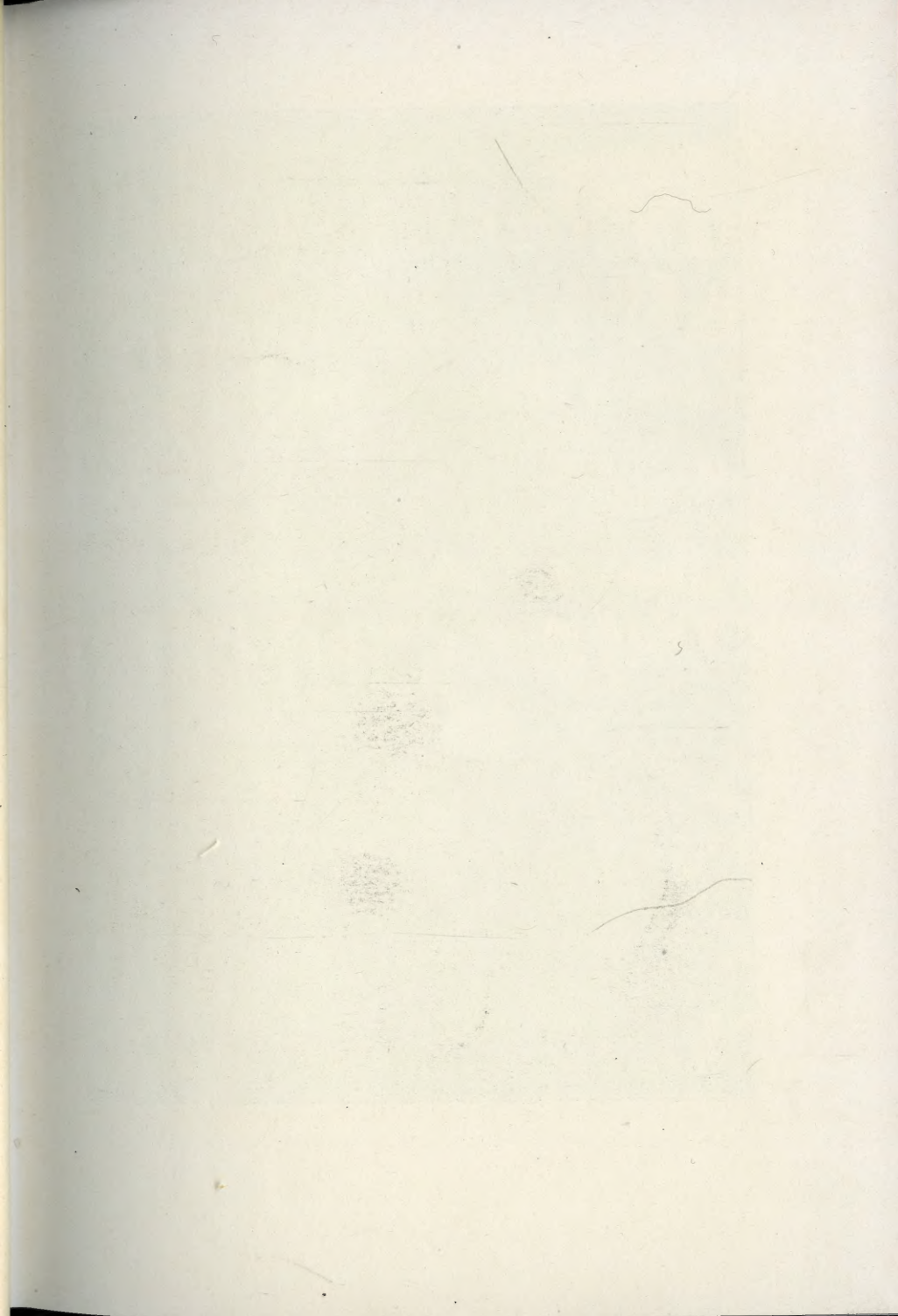


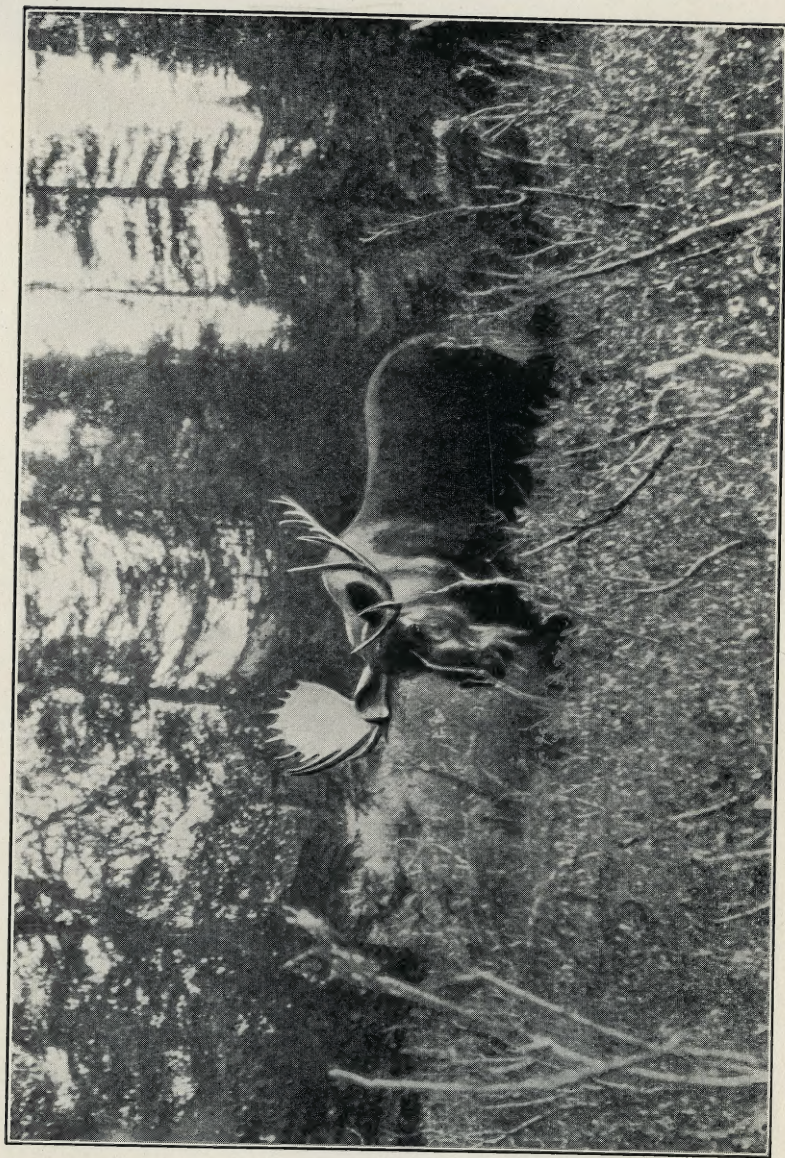
Ex Libris
JOHN AND MARTHA DANIELS

and RNNT









Up for Inspection

Copyright
J. W. E.

HUNTING
ON
KENAI PENINSULA
AND
OBSERVATIONS ON THE INCREASE
OF BIG GAME IN NORTH AMERICA

By J. W. EDDY



LOWMAN & HANFORD Co.
MCMXXIV

Copyright 1925

John W. Eddy

To

A. W. Leonard

*With the hope that these letters
will convey to you something of what
a hunting trip means to me.*

Joe W Eddy





LETTERS TO MY SISTER

LUCRETIA EDDY COTCHETT

Paris, France

Written on the Steamer Alaska

About My Hunting Trip on

The Kenai Peninsula, 1924

JOHN W. EDDY

My Dear Sister:

Here I am on my way home after a wonderful hunting trip in Alaska, that great country that is truly our present day frontier. When we left Seattle, August twenty-third, on this same steamer, our enjoyable Puget Sound summer season was drawing to a close and my usual desire for the wilderness in the months

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

of September and October was creeping into my system.

From September first to October tenth I lived the life of a wilderness hunter, meeting nobody except our own party of seven, walked more than four hundred miles, and boxed up in the hold of this ship are my trophies, three white mountain sheep heads, one large moose head with fifty-eight inch spread, twenty-eight points, and seventeen inch palms, all very heavy and fine dark color. Also two black bear hides in wonderful condition, one six feet two, and the other a little over seven feet, which is about as large as black bear grow.

Such things by themselves have little intrinsic value but being incidents of forty days spent in the wilderness, they have a value to me which you can hardly comprehend. Possibly you will under-

Hunting on Kenai Peninsula

stand if I tell you more about our wanderings.

All the family was down to see Edward and me sail from Seattle on the steamer "Alaska," and it was mighty hard to leave them for so long a time. Edward Garrett had one large stateroom and bath, and I had the adjoining one with door between. Here were all the comforts, room and service of the best Atlantic liners. Amid such luxury we steamed North and West for six days, first through the wonderful Inside Passage, a thousand miles of narrow reaches and bays lined with forests and mountains. The ship stopped rather infrequently at the small towns enroute, such as Ketchikan, Wrangell, and Juneau, the capital of Alaska. From Juneau we turned more westward and out into the broad Pacific Ocean.

(7)



❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

It takes this fast steamer just thirty-six hours to cross what is called the Gulf of Alaska. The only shore line is to the north and its distance from the ship's course varies from twenty-five miles at Cape St. Elias to two hundred miles at Mt. St. Elias and Malaspina Glacier. On the way up we saw Bering Glacier and Mt. St. Elias, 18,000 feet high. As we are making this crossing today on our return trip, I can now see the pure white mountains rising from the sea and hope to get a view of St. Elias this evening.

When we rounded Cape Hinchinbrook we entered Prince William Sound, full of islands and surrounded by mountains. Some were snow-covered with glaciers reaching to the sea. This district is the northern limit of our ship's voyage, so it runs all about Prince William



A Double on Mountain Goat—One shot with the camera, one killed with the rifle

*Copyright
J. W. E.*



Hunting on Kenai Peninsula

Sound, stopping first at Cordova, the terminus of the Copper River Railway. An excursion train took us up the line fifty miles where a great bridge crosses Copper River between the ends of Miles and Childs Glaciers.

Here the train was sidetracked and all the passengers walked along the left bank of the river. On the opposite side is the active face of Childs Glacier. This vertical cliff of blue ice is two hundred feet high and extends two miles along the river's course. Every few minutes tons of ice fall from the face of the glacier and float down stream in the form of icebergs. The roar was incessant and from a safe distance it appeared that nature was doing its best to entertain us. The excursion train returned us to our steamer and we proceeded northward up Prince William Sound headed for Val-

❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧

dez. At a point between Cordova and Valdez, Columbia Glacier comes pouring down from a great ice field back in the interior, winding its way between the mountains and ends in a huge cliff of ice at salt water. The face of this glacier is higher, longer and more imposing than Childs glacier. The Captain backed the steamer right up close to this wall of ice and blew the big whistle. The sound waves caused tons of ice to break off and as these fell into the sea, huge waves came towards us and helped us on our way.

We sailed northward up a deep fiord with mountains on each side, jumping up six thousand feet, glaciers spilling out between the peaks and water-falls everywhere foaming over rocks, across alpine meadows and through the steep timbered slopes. Leaving Valdez we stopped at

❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧

several canneries and the Latouche Mine, finally reaching our destination, Seward, Saturday, just one week from home.

Andy Simons, our guide, was on the dock to meet us so we started in to purchase our supplies and camp outfit. Of course we had brought our clothing, beds, tents and guns from Seattle, but our purchases here amounted to \$250.00 for food, dishes, axes, etc. Sunday, it rained and blew hard, which gave us another day to complete arrangements, and at seven o'clock Monday morning, September first, we started out of Seward in a seven-passenger auto and a Ford truck, just as the sun came shining through the "Harding Gateway" to Alaska.

The Highway extends only twenty miles to the shore of Lake Kenai. Here Andy had two boats about twenty-six feet long, by five feet beam. Into these

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

we put our outfit and the seven men of our party, two guides, two packers, a cook and Edward and myself. A larger gas boat towed us over to Andy's house, two miles away, and then down the Lake twenty-seven miles to the "landing" where it empties into Kenai River. This river connects Lake Kenai and Lake Skilak, it is seventeen miles long and has a current of five to ten miles an hour over rapids and through canyons. We let go the tow boat sometime after lunch and that was the last tie connecting us with civilization. For the next forty days we neither heard nor saw anything from the outside.

The atmospheric condition got a little hazy as we approached the last canyon on the river and Andy feared to go through. We therefore made camp for the night on the site of an old Russian

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

penal settlement of some two hundred years ago, at least the boys said it was, but nothing was there to prove it. By sunrise we were all packed into the boats again and it took less than an hour to run the balance of the river into Skilak Lake. Here Andy put his Evinrude motor on one of the boats and while he was tuning it up I walked around the point to a marsh with my shot gun. Two ducks flew away as I approached but I saw four others swim into the grass, and as they came to an open space I fired and picked up four mallards, born this spring and just reaching maturity. These did not know enough to fly as the two old ones had done. The outfit was surprised and delighted. They asked me how I got that arm full of ducks with one shot from the little gun. As we proceeded down the lake fourteen

❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧

miles to Andy's cache, the cook picked and cleaned the ducks, reducing their weight as much as possible because from the cache all is back packing. We reached the cache for lunch and worked until mid-afternoon, making up our loads, storing all we would not need or could get along without. The two boats were hauled on shore and covered with grass.

Then we started up the "King's County Trail." This trail or rather where there used to be a trail, was made some fifty years ago by a boat load of Argonauts from New York. They sailed around Cape Horn up the Pacific to Kenai Peninsula with a load of people and all kinds of pioneer articles, such as two hundred looking glasses, five barrels of door knobs and several large meat chopping blocks. We saw the remains of a cabin and a cache which is all that



Andy's Cache (Page 14)



We Carried Our Heavy Loads (Page 15)

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

remains of the foolish venture. I believe they found some gold, but it was mostly quarreling and all disappointment. We carried our heavy loads up the hills, through the marshes, over the ridges until dark caught us in the "Cotton Woods." When the packs were off we rushed to the stream at the edge of the grove for a drink and there saw our first big game, five or six moose right in the open, only a few hundred yards away.

We watched them trot up the ridge and one big fellow stood for a minute on the sky line, looking huge with a great spread of horns outlined in the fading light against the western sky. I asked Andy the other day, after the hunt was over, how large his horns probably were and he said not nearly as large as the ones I got.

The next day we made over fourteen

(15)



Hunting on Kenai Peninsula

miles, floundering through brush and bog up to timber line. We went along quietly, resting when we came near a moose until it moved out of sight. It is a good plan to disturb the game as little as possible when moving to your camps through the game country. I was quite tired out when we finally reached what was to be our base camp for the sheep hunt. We now designate it by the name of the "little bear camp" because I shot my smaller bear while hunting from here.

I was rested the next morning when the two guides, Ed and myself walked up out of the few trees around the camp into the open alp lands that extend from timber line up to the rocky sides of the mountains just above. The two packers had started back down to the Lake again for supplies to keep us going. Our walk



Crossing the Killey River



== Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ==

was more to look the country over and size up the game than to do much real hunting. After we had walked upward for an hour or more, we sat down and examined the landscape. All Alaska seemed spread out before us. To the North we looked over half of Kenai Peninsula way up to Anchorage with Mt. McKinley (20,319 ft.), and Mt. Foraker (17,000 ft.), towering in the distance two hundred miles away. Forty miles to the west was Cook's Inlet with a zig-zag white mountain range as plain as day on its further shore. With the assistance of a map we picked out Mt. Spur, Mt. Redoubt and a curl of smoke was rising from the shoulder of Iliamna Volcano.

Below us the famous moose country with its lakes, swamps, ridges and hills. Skilak Lake, where we were two days

== Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ==

ago, seemed almost at our feet. Behind us rose the Kenai mountains and their ice fields, further back, looked cold and forbidding. Somewhere amid those crags our sheep trophies were roaming quite unaware that their time was approaching. We looked through our glasses at the moose in the swamps and open spaces far below us, and to our right saw a bear with two cubs eating berries on the open slopes across the Funny River Canyon; then we moved on up closer to the sheep country. Soon Andy spied a lone ram just below a patch of snow off to the left above us. He could not make out why a ram should be there, as at this time of year all sheep are supposed to be on the next range beyond, where we were going the following day.

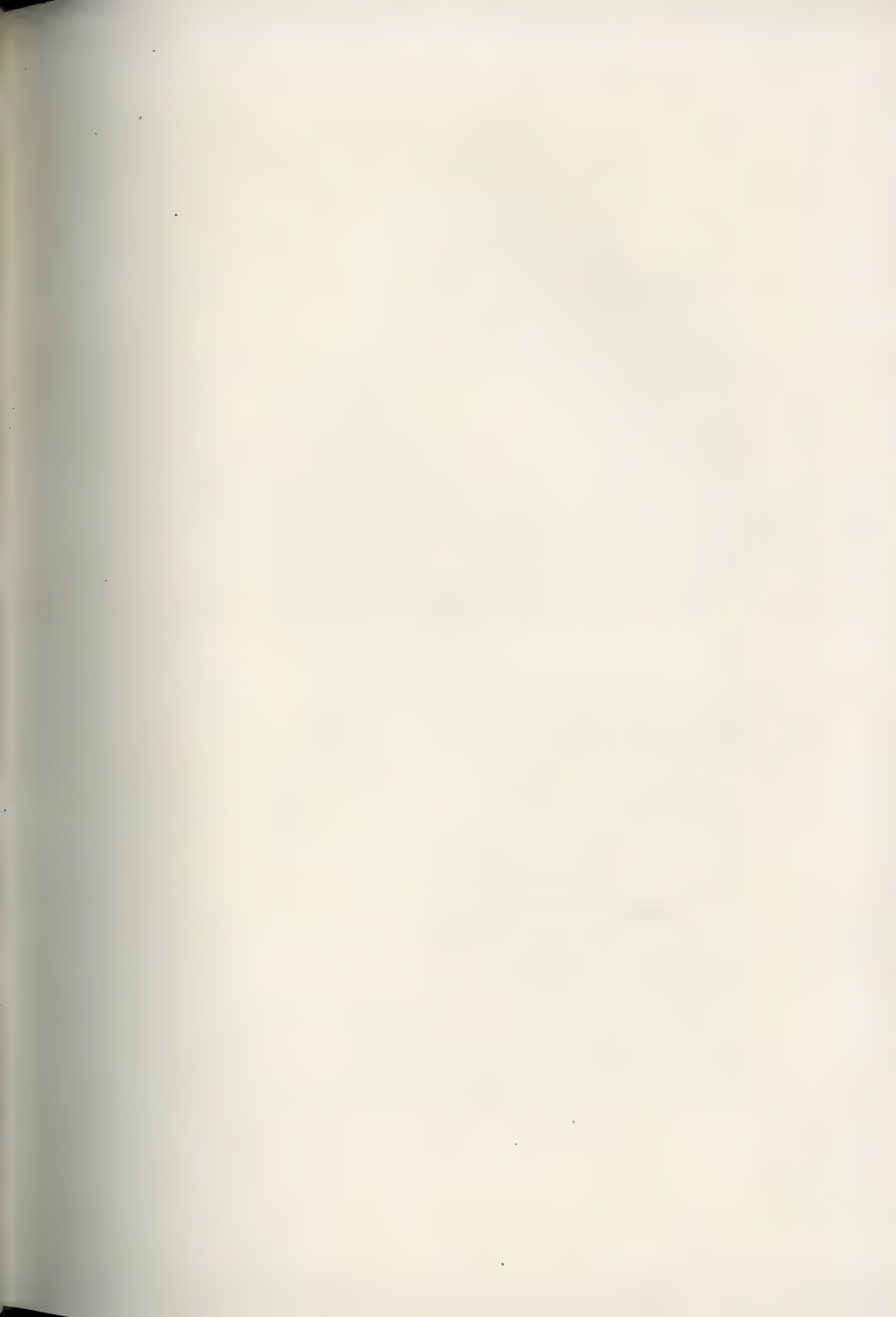
Our course to look over that further

== Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ==

range would take us towards this ram so we put our glasses on him now and then. We decided he was not a very large sheep and Ed said he was not big enough for him. I figured no young ram would be way off by himself, and if he seemed to have fair horns I decided to take him and trust that my next two sheep would be larger. Besides we needed the meat, with seven men to feed and our main supply eighteen miles away, all hard back packing. We climbed around the mountains to the right behind two peaks and came out on the slide rock above the lone ram. There was a rim of rock a few yards down from us and we crawled down part way to it. When we peeked over to see if he was there he saw us at once and began walking towards some brush. I was quite nervous as there were three others to watch the

Hunting on Kenai Peninsula

success or failure of my first shot of the season. The steep angle of forty-five degrees, though only one hundred and twenty-five yards in distance, made it none too easy. I wanted to shoot sitting down just as I had practiced at home but could not get the sights of the gun on the ram over the rim rock. I moved down a little so the bullet would just clear the rock and fired. The ram flinched a little and started to run. They said I hit him and when he turned his other side towards us, it was covered with blood from the shoulder down his front leg. Nevertheless he kept trotting away, occasionally stopping to rest but never lying down. We ran back around the peak and watched him slowly climb the side of the next mountain. As he passed out of sight we hurried over to the other side of that mountain. Andy





A Fairly Good Head (Page 21)

Hunting on Kenai Peninsula

said he would not go down to the timber and river below us but should soon be coming towards us. We walked along on the slide rock and very soon he appeared one hundred fifty yards in front. Andy said kill him dead or he will kick himself way down the cliffs. The poor thing was about finished anyway and just stood and looked at me. I shot him fair in the shoulder and he wilted in his tracks. We dressed him, or rather undressed him and that night had plenty of meat in camp and a fairly good head with thirteen-inch horns and nearly a full turn.

The next day we moved camp over to the real sheep country on Indian River. We left everything except bare necessities at the base camp for it was a long pull over two mountain passes and down steep cliffs into the canyon of Indian

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

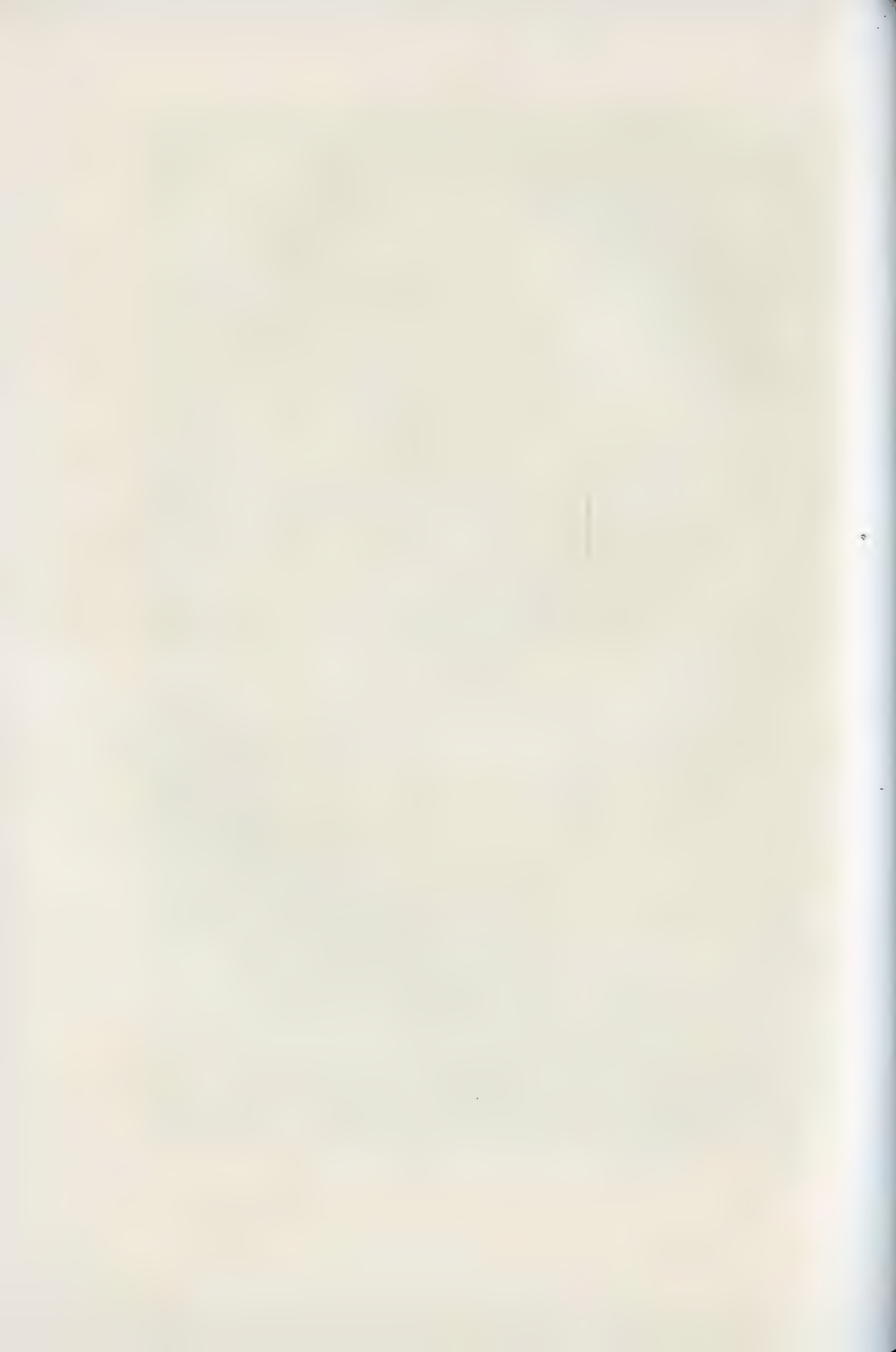
River, very close to where it flows from under its glacier. On the way over we herded some hundreds of ewes and lambs out of the valleys. These scampered in long lines up and back into the mountains.

Our Indian River camp was not very comfortable. We had our beds and tent but the latter was tied only to some alder brush and on damp sloping ground, firewood was scarce and the wind blew cold down from the glacier. My left foot had gone bad from a sprain so I had to lay in camp and steam it by the fire while Ed traveled the mountains and came home at dusk with the biggest sheep head, fifteen inches and more than a full turn.

The next day my foot was better so Andy and I climbed over and circled many mountains. Although we saw ten



Our Indian River Camp (Page 22)



❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

or a dozen rams, none were large enough until late in the afternoon, I spied a big fellow lying down with three smaller ones on the rounding top of the next mountain. We had to wait until some ewes and lambs moved out of the basin below, then we crossed over and climbed up the back side of the mountain. When we were high enough to look where the big fellow had been, he and the others had gone and we had to hustle back to camp.

Three hours steady grind got us there after dark. On the way we saw the big ram feeding on the mountain side. That night Ed said: "You take Andy and get the big fellow you have spotted and I'll go out with Al," (our second guide who was rather incapable). But during the night our worst storm broke upon us. The wind howled and rain poured down

(23)



Hunting on Kenai Peninsula

in sheets. Our tent tugged at its fastenings but did not leave us; our air mattresses were afloat. Fortunately the tent did not leak and everything held until after daylight. The guides cut a path into the center of the alder patch where there was some shelter from the wind and the ground lumpy with a few dry spots.

Here they were able to make a fire and boil some beans. While these were cooking we had to move the tent further into the alders to keep it from blowing away, although the ground was just a bog. Ed and I went to bed again. Now and then one of the guides would dash out and cook some food which we would all eat lying down in the tent. Towards evening it began to clear and the next morning the sun was out.

Right here let me pay my respects to

❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧

the Alaska climate in the game fields of the Kenai Peninsula. This was the only bad storm we had that prevented hunting from September first to October eleventh, and it did not last twenty-four hours. On a few other days it rained but would always clear at night and come out bright and fair the next day. Generally the nights were clear with a bright moon and a little frost. Sometimes the water would freeze in the wash basin.

Up the cliffs Andy and I went the next morning. We could see sheep moving about in all directions. New snow had fallen over the mountains and all the game was moving. Soon we ran into a bunch of eight rams but they were on their way to a big basin, had seen us first and kept out of range. Fortunately they were traveling in the direction that we

Hunting on Kenai Peninsula

had seen the big ram two days before. We followed along putting the glasses on them now and then.

Finally we discovered them lying down at the upper end of a valley that was full of ewes and lambs. We tried a stalk but when we got half way down the cliff, quite a ways to their right, we saw the eight rams leading the whole outfit, some hundred lambs, rams and ewes up the other side over the snow crest to the promised land beyond. We quit them right there and climbed up and over to the draw from which we had seen the big fellow. This valley was also full of sheep. Of course you will realize we were looking over a lot of country and our binoculars brought sheep two or three miles away up rather close for inspection. We were afraid to move for fear of starting another exodus. One

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

bunch of lambs or rams would come into view over a ledge then disappear, next a bunch would come out of the creek bottom. Some were feeding up the opposite side of the valley and four rams came over the top on our side. These seemed to be feeding towards us but finally lay down on a big snow field near the top.

It was getting near two o'clock and we knew our packers would be coming along soon with more grub. They would pass the lower end of this valley, all the sheep would move up and possibly a big one would come in range. At any rate we could not move. Then I saw the greatest band of rams ever. About fifty or sixty, possibly a hundred, came marching down the snow field from the upper end of the valley. A big fellow was in the lead the others marching

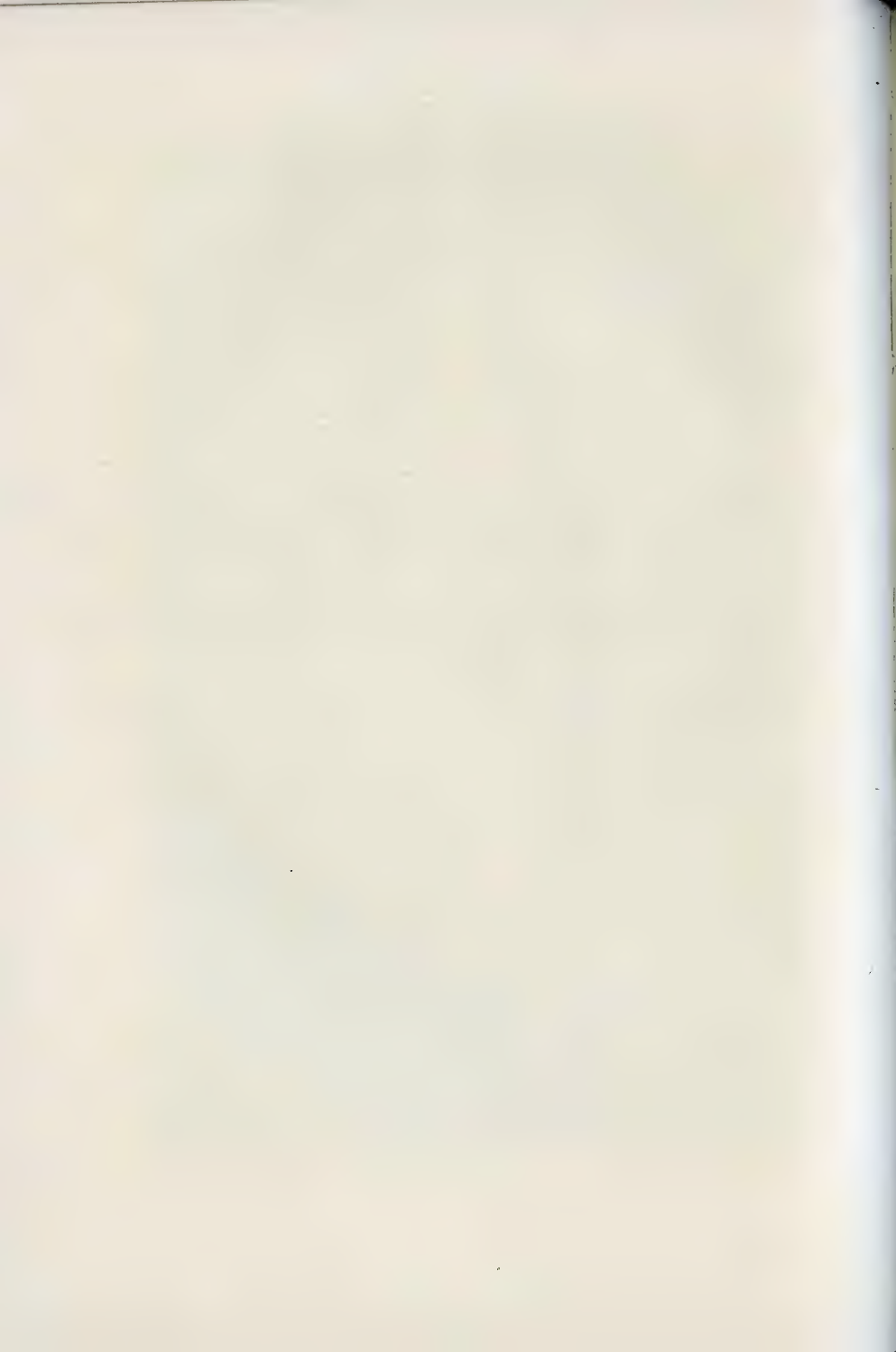
❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

behind him, fan shape with solemn, stately tread. They had spent the summer months alone, high up among the glaciers and the storm had reminded them that they should now come down to see how the lambs and ewes were getting along. Andy and I were watching them slowly descend to the floor of the valley when our packers appeared like little specks barely moving at the lower end of the valley. Every sheep saw them and a general movement upward started. The great band of rams halted, counter marched and with the same dignified mien, marched up the snow field again over the sky line and out of sight. None of the other sheep came near us and the four rams lying down above us had not moved.

We were getting cold and something had to be done. Andy crawled back into



High Up Among the Glaciers (Page 28)



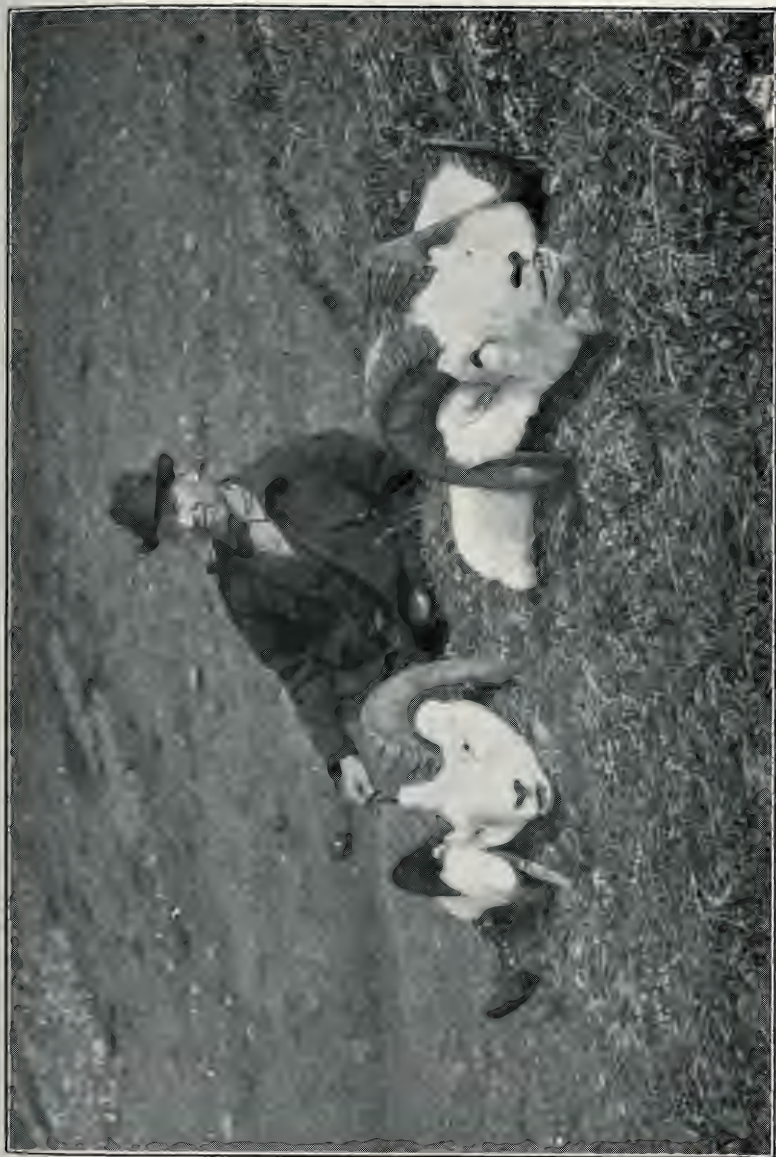
the draw while I watched the four sheep above. For some reason they did not move although they could see him part of the time. I crawled back and they still remained. Now we hustled through the draw and up to the top to get above these rams, one of which I knew was a big fellow. After half an hour climb we looked over and there they were, not one hundred and fifty yards away.

One which I took to be the largest, was lying down. I assumed my favorite position for shooting, sitting with elbows resting on my knees, but when I aimed I found that I was in an uncomfortable and strained position. I shifted around on the slide rock and found a more comfortable seat, then fired at the one lying down. The bullet struck him square in the shoulder, he merely dropped his head and died. Andy said, "You

Hunting on Kenai Peninsula

had better shoot the other, he has larger horns than the dead one." The 405 Winchester roared again and that ram stopped, then, staggered on again with one of the smaller rams walking slowly beside him. Andy said, "You had better shoot him again if that little one gets out of the way." Soon the big fellow stopped, the little one walked ahead and my next shot rolled him down the snow bank. I had made a double on rams, my bag of three sheep was full and that part of the hunt was finished for me.

We took some pictures, then, removed the heads and capes. Returning to camp we circled the mountains, climbed down the cliffs in the dark with the camp fire shining cheerfully miles down below. Next morning I wished Ed quick success with his next two sheep and hustled off



Double on Rams (Page 30)



Pap Tent / Page 31 /

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

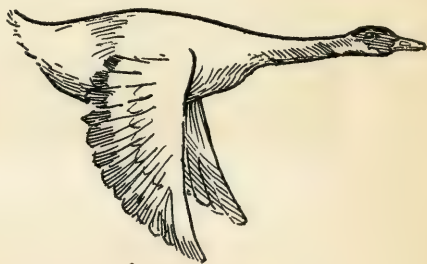
to our base camp, accompanied by the two packers and our guide, Al.

* * * * *

I am writing now at midnight and this good ship has passed out of the Pacific into Icy Straits. No more fear of rough weather as all the rest is Inside Passage. In three nights and three days I will be home with my dear ones.

The day after bagging my rams I proceeded to make myself comfortable at the base camp, knowing it would take Ed three or four days to get his rams. This would give me a chance to rest, mend my clothes, clean up and possibly get a bear. Ed had taken our tent up among the glaciers but I made a pup tent with a canvas tarpaulin. It was only three feet high and just the width of my bed, about as pleasant to dress in as a Pullman upper berth. Both ends were open, which permitted the wind to blow

(31)



== Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ==

through, unchecked. However, by placing huge piles of spruce boughs at each end to stop the wind and rain, I made it quite comfortable. Here Al and I had things our own way, cooking our meals, washing up and shaving.

The two packers joined by the cook, were busy bringing supplies from the lake, taking things on up to Ed and Andy, even doing some cooking for them, as they were hunting from daylight and not getting down to camp until after dark. I was glad of a little let up, for the hard work and living conditions at the sheep camp had left me tired and gaunt.

Rested and clean, about noon the next day, Al and I started out on the uplands to look for a black bear. At this time of year the Blacks come up out of the timber to feed on the great quantities of



White Sheep (*Ovis dalli*) (Page 30)

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

cranberries, blueberries and mossberries, while the brown bears are below in the brush fishing for salmon along the streams. We headed over beyond where I shot my first sheep.

We walked way around the mountain on which I had killed the lone ram but lower down along its grassy terraces. There were many bear signs, so about two o'clock I climbed into a protected niche in the cliffs and sat down to watch, hoping that a bear would come out on the slopes below. I was protected from the wind, the sun was nice and warm, the moose country spread out to the north and the whole map of the Cook's Inlet country glistened in the clear atmosphere of a perfect afternoon.

At such a time the hunter sees everything; motion close at hand is quickly observed, but he must study every con-

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

trast of form and shade in order to spy game at a distance. Such a riot of color as Alaska now presented to me. My eyes would wander far down to the lowlands where all is yellow and brown, broken here and there by a silvery lake or winding stream. Along the ridges is the dark green of the struggling Alaska spruce forest, spreading out over large areas on the foot hills, then cutting off sharp at timber line. Between the dark green forests the creek beds circle and curve upward in streams of yellow where frost has touched the willows, birches and cottonwoods. On the steep slopes and grassy knolls bordering the streams, bunches of quaking asp tremble and shimmer like gold as their yellow and green leaves are shaken by the breeze in the bright sun, and the mountain ash

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

adds splotches of red with its large fire-colored berries.

Above the trees extend the alp lands covered with the yellow dwarf willow and the green, bronze and red grasses and mosses, a veritable artist's palette.

Still higher the slide rock, the cliffs and mountain tops where the white snow line gradually descends as the season advances and the blue glaciers fill in the crevices.

This, in my opinion, is one of the most interesting features of hunting; this close communion and opportunity of studying and enjoying nature.

You must understand that elevation causes this variety of verdure. Elevation also governs the bird and animal life. From my high seat I could see rock ptarmigan close at hand. A little lower down among the bushes was a covey of

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

willow ptarmigan. And I knew a pair of Canada grouse (spruce hens) occupied every bunch of timber in the low country. The wild cry of a great flock of whooping cranes attracted my attention. I counted over two hundred of these large birds as they circled between earth and sky; and at night, flock after flock of geese honked and journeyed southward.

Sharply my attention was caught by a lone bear which walked over the top of a knoll half a mile below us, feeding as he hustled about. We hurried down across the draw and up the slope of his hill, the wind being favorable. Al peeked over and said, "There he is, eighty yards away. I stepped out prepared to shoot but he was walking over the top and all I had for a target was his rear end. I tried to kneel but could not

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

aim with my elbow on the knee so had to shoot off hand, kneeling. Fortunately the bear turned a little quartering, and my first shot hit him in the ham of the hind leg. It broke the bone, ranged forward through the stomach and burst a big hole as it came out the other side. Instantly the bear reared up his full height, swung his front paws to his rear end where the bullet had entered and turned two or three back somersaults down the hill towards us.

While he was turning over in the air I shot again and hit him in a forepaw, the bullet entering the shoulder. I could see a stream of berries and steam blowing out of the hole in his side with each somersault and knew he was my bear. Finally he lay quiet, sixty-five paces from us and gave the usual cry of a dying bear. Fortunately my first shot was properly

== Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ==

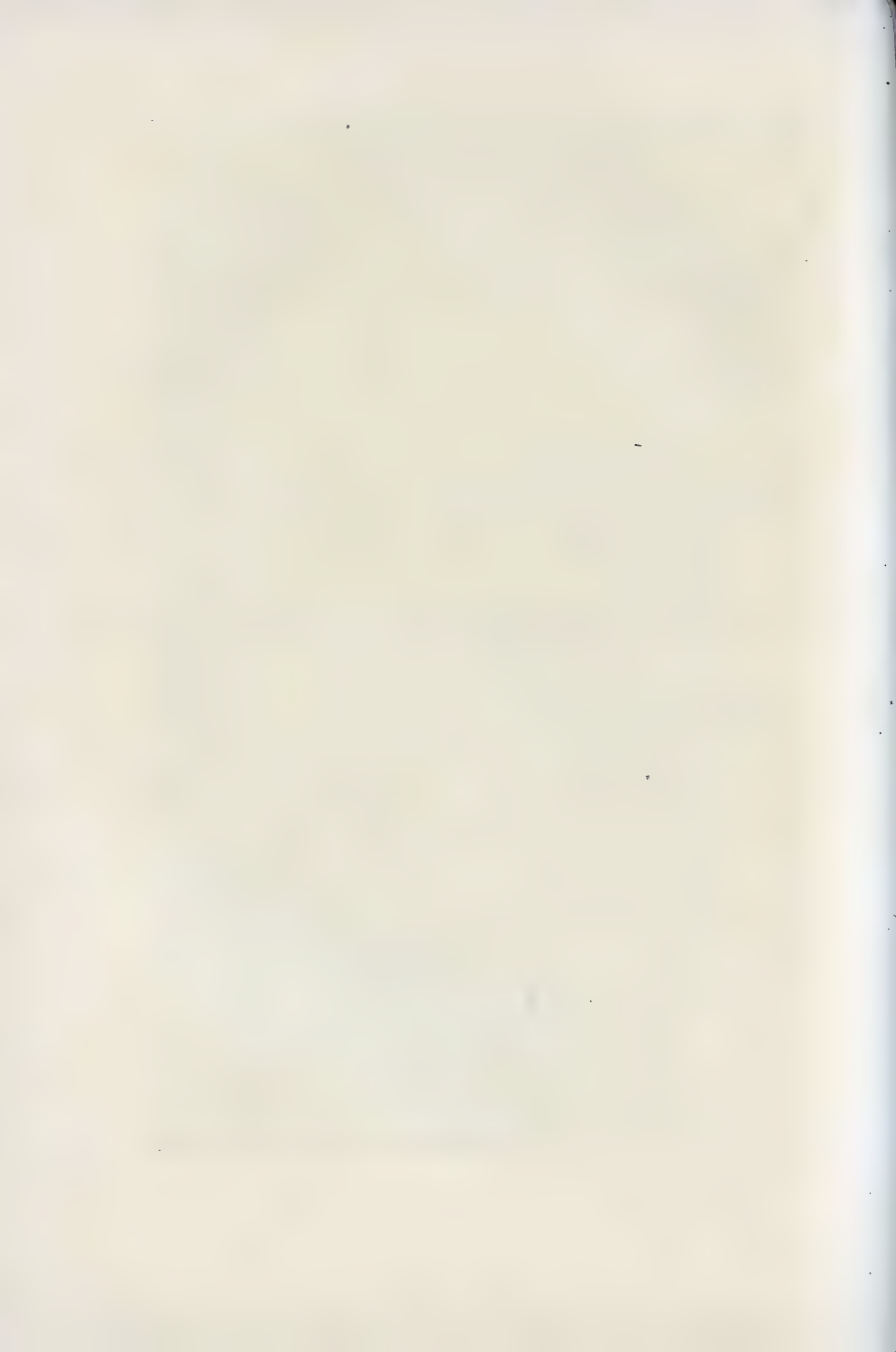
placed and fatal. If I had merely wounded him he would have run down the other side and been lost to us in the alder brush.

Al skinned the body of the bear but just cut off the head and put the head and hide in his pack sack. Then we cut off the uninjured ham which I put in my pack sack and in two hours we were home for supper. This bear was killed just opposite Benjamin Creek, so the next noon we hunted in the other direction towards the Funny River.

By three o'clock we had crossed this stream and climbed the steep opposite side. The first time Al looked across the basin with his glasses he saw a bear feeding between the alder patches. In size he appeared like a twin brother of the first bear which measured six feet two inches from tip to tip. The wind was light



Six Feet Two Inches From Tip to Tip (Page 38)



❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

and puffy from various directions and we made a bum stalk.

When we reached the spot where we expected to see the bear coming up nothing was visible. We thought he might have drifted into an alder patch and so sat down to wait. Soon Al said, "There he goes above us." I swung around and fired at his tail as it disappeared in the alders. Next he made a leap from the upper end of that patch of brush into another. I fired like a real shot gun shooter leading him about three feet, forgetting that a leaping bear is slower than a flying duck. There is now one lucky bear roaming the tundra of Alaska whose hide will never decorate the floor of my library.

In spite of missing this bear I will say my shooting on this trip has convinced me that I am a pretty good shot with a

(39)



❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧

rifle except when the game is on the run in full flight. This bear is the only animal I shot at and failed to mortally wound with the first shot.

Some of the boys were in camp when we returned and reported that Ed had his second sheep but was having a hard time getting his third. They were going up again next day to move him down into the moose country, saying surely he must have it by that night or the next. I sent word that he had better be satisfied as two sheep were enough anyway.

The next day and night I was alone in the wilderness at the little bear camp. All the packers, the guides and cook were moving Ed's camp. It was a fine rest; I read, cooked my meals and shot some ptarmigan with the twenty-two. About noon on the second day Al came into camp and stated that Ed had his

❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧

last sheep, shooting it after dark the day before and not reaching camp until midnight. They had moved the camp, or what was left of it, some three miles down below me on the Funny River. That morning on the way over one of the passes they had seen the swarming of the ptarmigan. Thousands of these fine birds coming up in flocks from the brush below flying around the open mountain side. Al and I packed up what we could carry and reached the new camp in a rainstorm late in the afternoon. Soon Ed and Andy came in, wet to the skin. They had been reconnoitering and had seen several moose.

Next day Andy and I went down the river four or five miles on the more open side and saw a few cows and one bull in the distance. At noon we crossed over and ascended the other side which was

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

covered with a not too heavy spruce forest. After we had gotten well up into the woods Andy stopped and pointed to a cow moose fifty yards away, next we made out several cows and two calves standing around among the trees. Andy said we would keep quiet and he would call the bull. He grunted through his birch-bark moose horn, swiped the brush and the trunk of a tree with an old moose shoulder blade that he carried and out came the bull towards us. We were right in an open glade in plain sight but motionless. The bull kept his eyes on us while he gradually approached, grunting and sweeping the brush with his huge antlers, making noises for all the world like Andy with his horn and the old shoulder blade.

He came up within forty feet of us, running his tongue out over his lips. His

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

eyes snapping red as he tried to make out what we were or where the other bull was that was challenging him. I had been taking his picture but put down my camera and picked up the rifle because he looked pretty mad. Gradually he worked around us in a circle, struck our trail and then our scent hit him like an electric shock and sent him bounding off with a loud snort. We ran into a dozen such families that afternoon. Sometimes the bull would be lying down and Andy would call him up for inspection, however, all failed to come up to my idea of a large Kenai trophy and we reached camp at dusk.

The cook and packers had come in and with Al's help had brought down the outfit so we were all together once more. The next morning we shouldered the most of it on our seven backs and

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

started down river twelve miles to establish our permanent base camp for the moose hunt. We met several bulls traveling along which showed that the rutting season was getting under way. The guides would call them up for inspection and to have their pictures taken. We built a fine camp on the bank of the river in a thick bunch of spruce. Now we started in to find two big sets of horns, one for Ed and one for me, as we were right in the heart of the moose country.

I had always thought the Kenai moose were larger and all grew bigger horns than the moose of any other place in the world. Such is not the case but here they are more numerous, live in big herds in the same strip of timber and work out into the open ridges and swamps in the evening, returning to the timber each morning. Thus the hunter can look

❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧

over several hundred bulls and shoot the one with the largest antlers. Other places you are lucky to see a bull and kill it, almost never getting the wise old bull with the wide spread and heavy horns.

Of course this part of the Kenai is a moose's paradise, the high mountains to the southeast where the sheep are, protect it from the coast storms. It will be raining in Seward and the mountains will draw all the water out of the clouds in the form of snow, leaving sunshine and pleasant weather over the rolling and flat lake country, where the great herds of moose roam and thrive.

For seventeen beautiful autumn days we hunted this wonderful country searching for heads that would be large enough to satisfy our desires for ever after in the matter of a moose trophy.

== Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ==

I think I put in eleven hard days with Andy and some easier ones with Al, but the latter did not count, as Al was hardly an expert at the game. After a few days spent in trying to sneak up on them in the woods we became discouraged. The weather was too fine with light shifting winds and absolute stillness. It took too long to work up on each bull so that only a few could be inspected each day.

We took a day to walk around some lakes lying six or seven miles to the eastward. The country was quite open and we saw many bulls through our glasses. That day I spent some time with one big fellow who had many cows in a beautiful grove of quaking asp. He had sixty-inch spread according to Andy's measuring rule, a stick with notches in it which he held out at arm's

❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧

length. But his palms were small and his brow points thin and needle-like. Another bull across a lake seemed to have enormous palms. As he went into a small bunch of spruce trees, Andy said he would lie down, so we marched over and there he was, fast asleep. We crept up to within two hundred feet and while his palms were good he had no spread. I took his picture as he rose and walked away.

We flushed another bull on a high ridge and saw him descend two hundred feet to a creek bottom, where another bull and cow were standing. The bulls approached each other in a challenging attitude, rolling from side to side like a ship in the trough of a heavy sea, their horns almost touching the ground on either side. In this manner they passed each other within a few feet several

(47)



❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

times, neither being willing to start the fight.

However, I did see the tail end of a fight several days later when two bulls rushed at each other and the clatter of their horns sounded like dropping a sling load of steel rails. As the rutting season progressed the woods began to resound with the crash of fighting horns. Andy says that later many crippled and wounded animals are seen.

Next we took our beds and a little grub out to the big, grassy knoll, prepared to watch the animals drift out of the woods at night onto the open ridges and marshes. They reminded me of pictures of rhinoceros on the African veldt as they came out in bunches of three to a dozen and disappeared in the swamps and darkness. In the morning we saw them going back up into the timber

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

again. As daylight approached we headed way out into the swamp, here we saw one bull with the largest set of horns, about sixty-five inches, but he was traveling and I never got within shooting range. We were all getting discouraged so it was decided to make a side camp well down in the swamp country.

The moose hunt was taking so much time that we now decided to give up the hunt for brown bear across Cook's Inlet and sent Al off alone to make the run down the Kenai River to the town of Kenai, discharge the gas boat we had engaged and send telegrams to our families.

He would return to Seward by Anchorage and the railroad, bringing our mail. We had taken grub for only twenty-five days, expecting to have our sheep and moose by this time and replen-

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

ish as we passed through the town of Kenai. Al's departure would help the food situation and he was not needed further by us.

The rest of us loaded our beds and a little food on our backs and started out among the marshes. On the way Andy and I left our packs to examine a moose off at one side. While Andy went back to join the others I cut across and while waiting for them to come I spied a black bear through the glasses. He was feeding about a mile ahead right on our route. I told Ed to go and shoot him, but by the time he reached the place the bear was running for the brush and his bullet did not connect.

The next morning we ate up all the grub for breakfast except four onions. We told Frank he must shoot some spruce partridge for dinner and if he



Snagged White Being Inspected



Large Bear Shot While Feeding on Moose Carcass (Page 51)

could not find these to get some rabbits and if both these failed to be sure and get a young porcupine. Ed and Alex went one way, Andy and I the other.

In about an hour Andy spied what looked like a black bear or a brown bear or both, just where the ridges begin and the swamps leave off. We stalked it carefully and finally came out eighty-five yards away and slightly above. It proved to be a big black bear lying down between the legs of a dead moose cow. I had to shoot between some large dead willows and smaller brush and could then only see a small part of the sleeping bear's fore shoulder. I moved around a little to get the largest opening through the trees and had to make a standing off-hand shot.

At the first shot the bear never raised his head and as Andy said, "You got

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

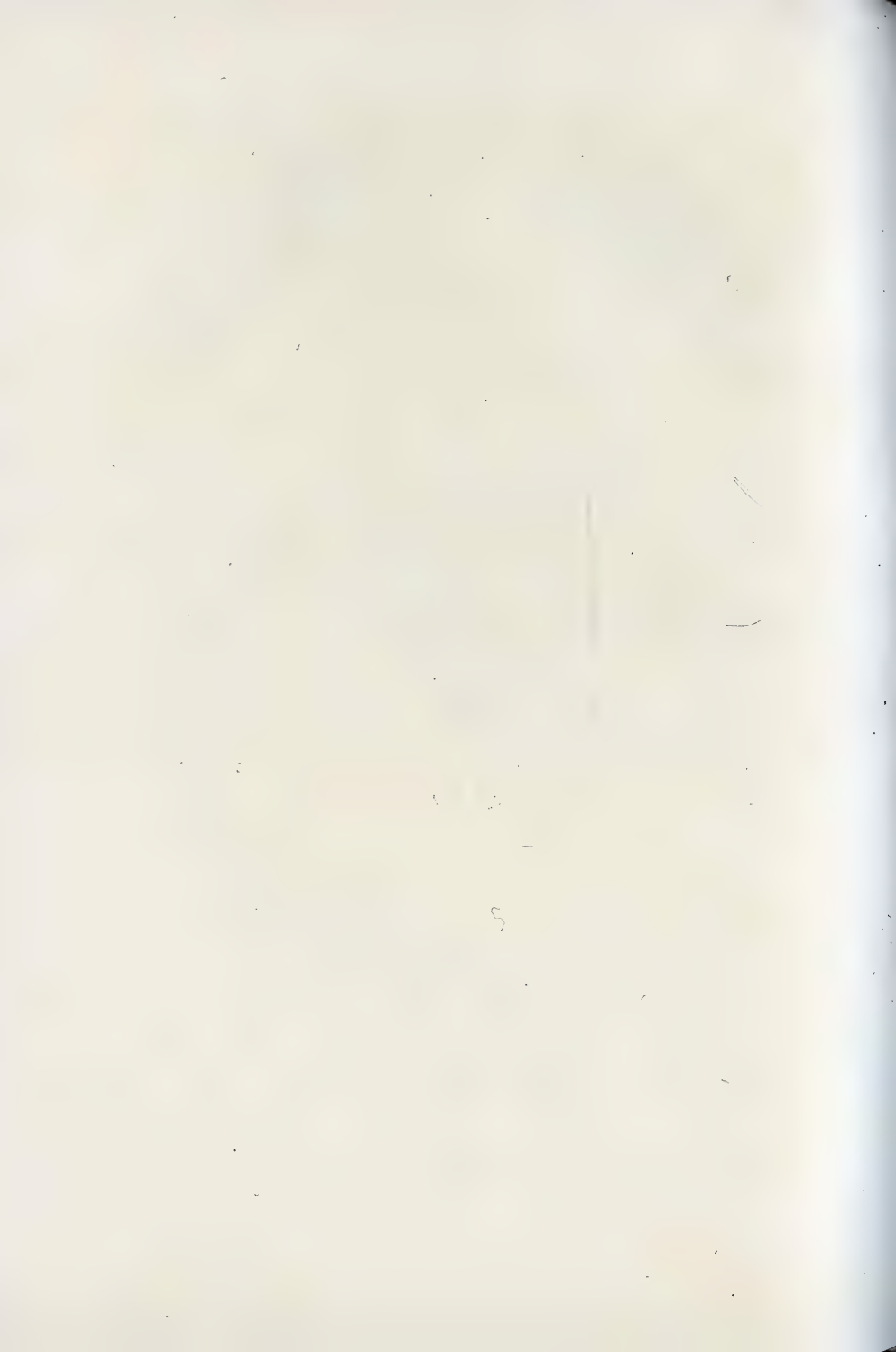
him," my second shot hit him in the neck. That was unnecessary for the first had burst his shoulder, heart and lungs, killing him instantly. He was about as large as black bears ever grow, seven feet long and a wonderfully fine coat of fur. I will show you the rug when you visit us in Seattle.

The smell around here was awful and the "white stocking" flies nearly ate us up while skinning the bear. Of course we could not use any of the meat for food. Andy carried that fifty-pound hide around on his back while we looked over some moose and we returned to camp at five p. m. to find Frank making a rabbit stew.

Next day we moved from the big black bear camp up near timber again on the height of land between Skilak Lake and Tustumena Lake. On the way we



(Page 52)



picked up two cans of corned beef, some beans and potatoes which we had cached on the way out. That night while we were waiting for the beans to boil, Ed said cut one of the cans of corn beef into four equal parts, one for each, as we were too hungry to wait for the beans to cook.

At 9:30 the beans were nearly done and we each ate a quart and a half of boiled beans. The next day Ed got his moose with sixty-two-inch spread so we called him the "bull of the woods." Our time was getting short and I had only two more days in which to find mine.

The first of October was a beautiful day and I spent all the time looking over the greatest herd of moose I ever expect to see. The rut was now in full swing. Cow moose were running through the

≡≡ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ≡≡

timber, bawling out their weird cry. Bulls were fighting and chasing each other and neither paid much attention to us, but among all these we could not find my trophy.

Before it was light on the second day Andy and I were on our way to a high knoll to see if any big fellow would be coming up from the swamps. I was rested and feeling fit and strong for another hard day's hunt. The day was breaking fine and I never felt better in my life when Andy spied a big fellow coming up the grade. He did not look like a sixty-inch spread but his horns were heavy so we scampered down to head him off.

When we got through a fringe of timber that separated us we could not see him for he had beaten us to it and had passed ahead of us into a little bunch of trees. He came out one hundred yards



above us and I asked Andy if he would measure fifty-four inches and he said, "Yes, better than fifty-six inches. Just wait until I call to him and get a better look." But the moose only turned slightly and I asked Andy if I had better shoot him. He replied, "If you wish," and the Winchester roared once. The moose stopped, collapsed a little, then started to make a few jumps when I shot him twice more in rapid succession and my Alaska hunt was over.

While Ed's trophy is the larger by all the rules of the game with its sixty-two-inch spread, against my fifty-seven inches, nevertheless mine looks heavier and has seventeen-inch palms against his of thirteen inches. I like the color of mine better. It is dark brown and very massive. They are both wonderful moose trophies.

(55)



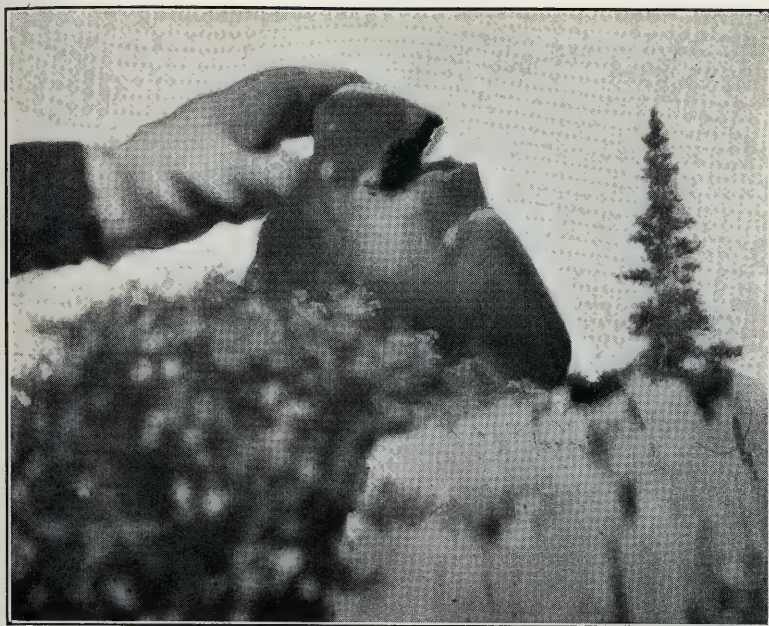
❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧

We cut off the head and cape, then took out the tongue and went after the heart and liver to help out on food supplies. However, my first shot had gone through the heart so only half of it was fit to eat. We called this, our last camp, Moose Heart camp, and now began the long trek to the cache on the lake, Seward and Seattle.

* * * * *

I had thought of ending this letter here but the ship is still following the placid waters of the wonderful Inside Passage and has not yet reached Wrangell. Possibly an account of our trip out and back to civilization may be of interest.

We left Moose Heart camp before noon, loaded with my trophy and as much of the camp outfit as possible and in four hours reached the base camp on the Funny River. Only the cook and



Shot Through the Heart (Page 56)

<



Loaded With Trophy (Page 56)

❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧

our tent were there, but not much else, as the packers had been busy moving all the trophies and unnecessary luggage to the lake.

The cook was in a great state of excitement for he had been here alone most of the time for a week or more. He is a young man, 22 years old, from Detroit, Michigan. This was his first experience in the wilderness, cooking, although he had been assistant cook on the dining car running from Anchorage to Fairbanks over the government railway. His lack of experience did not matter much as all the rest of us, except Ed, considered ourselves good camp cooks and all had a chance to try their hand in some of the various places.

When we arrived, Walter was all excitement as a bull moose had just tried to walk into camp. He heard him coming

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

as he had others on previous days and rushed to get his camera. The bull was a little far off when it passed him and started into the timber. Walter grunted as he had heard Andy call the big fellows and much to Walter's surprise the bull turned and came walking right at him. Just then we came trudging into camp from the opposite direction and when Walter heard us he thought it was another moose attacking him in the rear.

He also told us he thought a bear had walked over his bed two nights before. He did not see him as he feared to look up from under the blankets and canvas cover, but heard the bear rattle some tin cans. Of course there was no bear but it was probably an inquisitive porcupine prowling around.

Back went Andy to the Moose Heart camp for his bedding and other things

✓



The End of the Hunt (Page 59)

left there. Soon the packers returned from the lake and Alex started off to catch up with Andy and help him out next morning. As soon as morning came we loaded Frank and the cook up with my moose trophy and everything else they could carry. Then Ed and I waited a couple of hours for Andy and Alex to come down. We put the rest of the outfit on our backs and trudged along over the Moose Horn Trail to the lake. The cook and Frank had supper ready but we were not hungry as we had filled up on cranberries as we crossed the cranberry ridges.

Andy built the Moose Horn Trail several years ago and they have decorated it by hanging shed horns in the trees and bushes so as you pass one shed horn another horn appears ahead all the way from the Funny River over to and across

❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧

the Killey River and on down to the cache on Skilak Lake some thirteen miles.

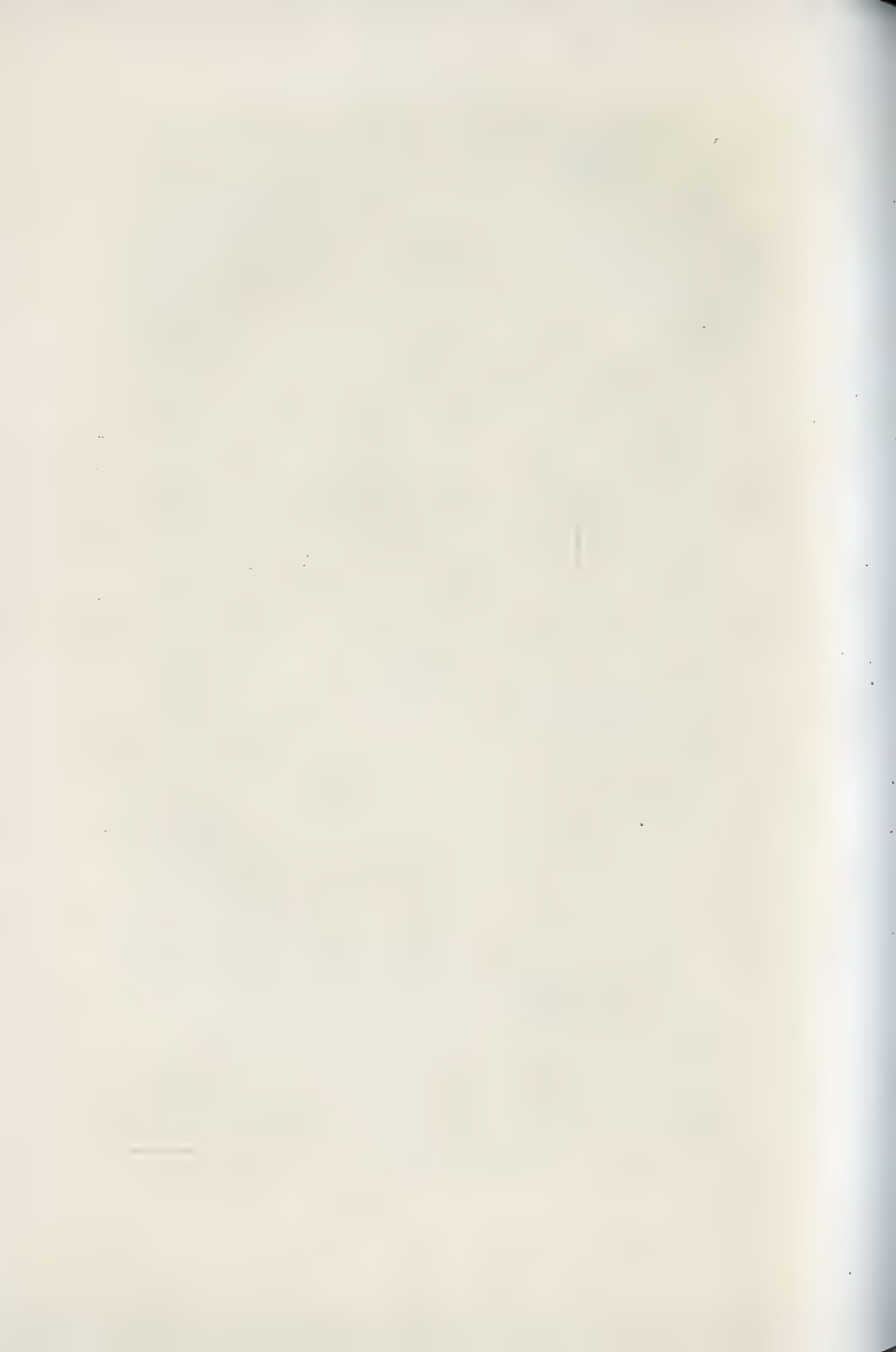
The low bush cranberry is delicious. It keeps all winter on the bushes, getting sweeter with every frost. I hope to have a keg sent out to me this winter just to give my family and friends a treat.

Everybody was tired the next morning and it was raining so we slept late. When it cleared all hands re-arranged their outfit some of which we had not seen for forty days. The hides and capes had to be gone over, resalted and tagged and everything ready to be put in our one boat next day. Frank and I went out to get some fish, grouse or rabbits as our food was nearly gone. I got one bird on the way up the lake shore.

We came back on the first bench and there I had great sport knocking over rabbits with my sixteen gauge shot gun



Everything Was Put into the Boat (Page 60)



❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

that had been all this time at the cache. The first two I missed as I had to shoot at a flash of white as they dashed off through the brush and down timber. Soon Frank called out to stop shooting as he could not carry more.

We had crossed to the upper end of the lake by noon next day and camped near the place where I had shot the four mallards on the way out. A fish creek runs down from a lake several miles up in the mountains and we spent the late afternoon looking for brown bear that might be feeding on the salmon. Andy and I came back early, having seen nothing, but when Ed and Alex returned they were all excited.

They had seen two brown bear and each had knocked one down as they were standing in the stream. The bears jumped on the bank and dashed off

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

through the thick spruce forest with bullets flying all around. Next morning we all went up and searched the woods but could not find a dead or wounded bear, so the hard tussle up the river to Kenai Lake was started. It was easy for Ed and me because we merely had to walk on a sort of a trail some ways back from the river, while our four men worked the boat up the rushing stream.

It took three days to go up the seventeen miles that we had come down in as many hours. The first day they made six miles and we all camped on the bank. The next day they said they would try to make a cabin seven miles up stream. Ed and I reached there about noon and found this note on the door, "This cabin is owned by Tom Towle. You are welcome to use it if you leave it in as good condition as you find it. Put out the

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

fires and shut the doors. Signed, Tom Towle; 1922."

We had left our good weather behind and it was raining hard when the men landed, cold, soaked and tired. Ed and I had cleaned up the place and had it all warmed up with a fire in the Sibley stove in the living room and one in the kitchen stove. It would have been tough making camp in such a storm if we had not reached the cabin, but never once had we been forced to do such a thing. That night we had a great dinner, cooking up all the food we had left except just enough for breakfast. We spread our beds all over the floor and enjoyed a fine night while the storm raged outside.

Ed and I had not walked far next day when we struck the beginning of a road or cleared trail and soon we came to a neat-looking cabin in a clearing with

(63)



❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

smoke curling from the chimney. I suggested we make the settler or trapper a call and just then a big up-standing old man walked out on the porch. We introduced ourselves and he said his name was Mr. Bob Seifert.

Everything about the cabin and the man was spotlessly clean and we discussed the political situation with him as it was a month or two previous. He said he only read the New York Times but did that every year for 365 days. A bull moose had come around his house a few nights previous and waked him. Standing in his door in his night gown he shot it in the head and the four quarters were hanging under the porch, so the cabin had the appearance of plenty.

Five miles further walking brought us to the upper lake and the so-called landing where Mr. Bell has a home and Dad



"Dad Fuller Has a Cabin" (Pages 64-65)

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

Fuller has a cabin. Dad took us right in and gave us a fine midday dinner of cub bear steak and wonderful salt rising bread.

We amused ourselves taking pictures of the dogs drawing in wood, the fox farm and catching fish from the dock. Fine lake trout and Dolly Vardens would grab the bunch of salmon egg bait as soon as it was under water. The bigger the bait the bigger the fish. I caught them up to three pounds and hard fighters too. About four o'clock our men came put, putting to the landing as they could use the Evinrude after passing the last rapids.

The weather was still threatening, with clouds rolling over the mountain tops surrounding the lake. Dad gave us a big supper and it was not until after eight that night that Andy came in and

≡≡ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ≡≡

said, "I guess we will have to try to run the lake tonight to my house. There is no wind now and she may blow too hard for us tomorrow." All the warm clothes and rain coats we had were put on, and off we started on a twenty-seven mile put.

For the first two hours it was beautiful, the moon breaking through the clouds now and then and lighting up the snow-covered mountains all about us. Then a rain started which turned to a driving snow storm and by two in the morning when Andy found his home and drove the boat on the beach we were all wet, and freezing cold.

The fires were soon built and Mrs. Simonds cooked us a real dinner. Our beds were spread out on the floor and when we woke next morning Mrs. Simonds gave us hundreds of her famous

== Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ==

sourdough pancakes. I guess she makes the best pancakes in Alaska or anywhere else. None could be better. We had telephoned for the automobiles and they took us all in to Seward. Next day we boarded this ship and are now living in the lap of luxury, with two large adjoining staterooms and two large bathrooms, fine service and excellent cuisine. Saturday morning at ten I shall see my wife and children, except Franklin who has returned to school.

Your affectionate brother,

JOHN W. EDDY.

P. S. We have one more night on this ship before reaching our destination and as this letter seems to have assumed the form of a continued story I thought I might include a description of our outfit for Walter's benefit as he has often

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

taken pleasure in describing to me his fishing paraphernalia.

I took only one rifle, a four hundred five Winchester, the same as I used when I first went big game hunting in Jackson's Hole, Wyoming, back in 1904 and most of my hunting trips since then. I know it is a big and heavy gun when compared with the new style, light, high velocity guns of today. I want to hit my game hard with a big chunk of lead and I can't agree with this new idea that a small bullet hurled at high velocity has the killing power of a large bullet hurled at a more moderate velocity.

All our game on this trip was shot under one hundred fifty yards, at which distance the velocity of the four hundred five is nearly two thousand foot seconds. Ed used an eight millimeter Mannlicher which has a velocity at one hundred

fifty yards of possibly three thousand foot seconds, but it did not have the striking power to hold the brown bear until he could put in a few more shots. Of course at long distances the four hundred five will not carry up with the lighter high velocity guns.

I don't think there is much fun shooting game at several hundred yards. Once in British Columbia I shot a moose four hundred fifty yards up the mountain side with a thirty Remington high power. It seemed unreal, just as if the moose had died of heart failure or some other cause. There was no working up to windward and carefully stalking the game. I pulled the trigger and a moose happened to die nearly a half a mile away. That was all there was to it and there was not much fun or excitement.

I bought one hundred and sixty

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

rounds of ammunition but only fired fourteen shots on the entire trip. All the rest is here in the stateroom going back to be burned up at the targets. Ed also brought his bolt action sporting model Remington along but it was left at the cache on Skilak Lake with my sixteen gauge Parker shot gun. I used this latter gun for shooting ducks, pheasant and rabbits on the trip into the cache and going out, but we only used a cheap twenty-two up in the game country. It made little noise and furnished us with ptarmigan, spruce hens and rabbits. The other boys had to do this shooting because it had a ten-pound trigger pull which was too much for me.

My fishing rod and tackle also stayed at the lake. However, we got one good trout up in the hills by hitting it over

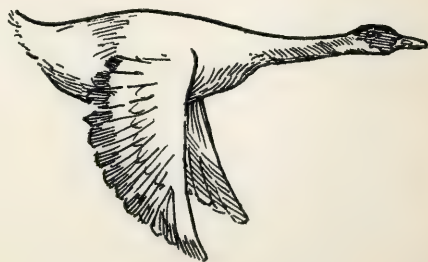
❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

the head with a stick as it was squirming over some riffles.

My camera was an ordinary box kodak with universal focus. A red-blooded hunter can enjoy taking pictures of game when he has his rifle along ready to shoot an exceptional specimen.

I probably had the best hunting glasses ever taken to Alaska. This was the "Zeiss" 8x40 Binoculars that I bought in Paris on the Rue de Rivoli. The eight power is just enough magnification considering the large field and the great amount of light taken in. I could sit for an hour on a hill spying out the game over a great expanse of country without the least bit of optical discomfort and when I watched through these glasses the two bull moose fighting I announced the binoculars had paid for themselves.

(71)

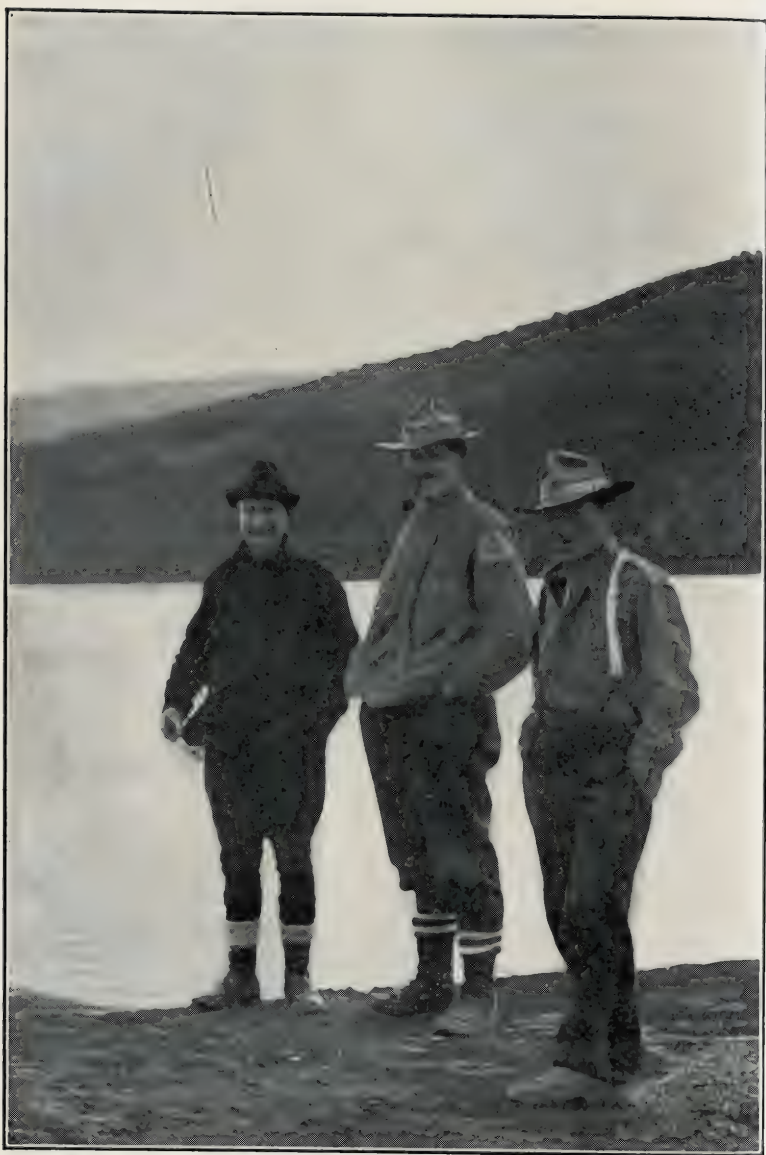


❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

The three tents were really more than were required. Our old white 9x10, the packer boys used at the lake. Ed and I generally had the new 9x10 brown tent set up. It was made of light weight material, the same as all these auto camping tents so common nowadays. It wore well, shed the rain and seemed all together better than the ordinary No. 8 or No. 10 duck canvas. An Alaska stove only did business at the lake and an auto tent heating stove is going back with me in the original package, unopened.

Our beds and sleeping outfits are the same as we always use and constitute most of the comforts of such a trip. An air mattress three inches thick, thirty inches wide and six feet long, and a few spruce boughs do the trick with an eider down sleeping bag in a balloon cloth slip.

✓



From Right, Andy, Ed, and Myself

For ordinary weather at night I wore flannel pajamas, when it got down to freezing I put on also my red bath robe. Then if it got still colder I added a thick woolen under suit with heavy golf stockings. A light auto robe and small pillow completed my night comforts. When we first got the air mattresses, a long tin air pump was furnished. It was broken the first day but a minute's blowing is good for the lungs and all is well.

There is only one suitable outfit for the daytime and that is what all outdoor men wear. A heavy mackinaw, brown flannel shirt, wool trousers, three pairs baled socks and light weight expensive wool underclothes. Rubber shoe packs with twelve-inch tops and any old hat will make a fellow look like a real trapper in Alaska or Canada. I had a little pair of rubbers which I used for slippers

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

around the camp and rubber wash basin so that I could always have warm water to wash in. Some of the crew at first thought this rather finicky, but as the mornings got colder I saw they were all asking the cook to put warm water in it for them.

I took a heavy slicker that I bought for Franklin when we were down on the Quinault but I only used it as an overcoat and generally it covered up the grub at night. In my jacket I always carried one of those paper-weight rubber coats. They wet through but shed the rain and did not soak my mackinaw.

I have now told you all about our outfit but a good guide is most important of all. Whenever I plan a hunting trip the first thing is to get into communication with the best guide in the selected game field. I write to the government

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

game officials, railroad officials, whose lines pass near the territory and then confirm their reports by letters from other big game hunters who have employed the guide I expect to use. This best guide is usually engaged ahead and it is often necessary to postpone your trip a year or two. Even with the greatest care I have drawn on a few occasions, poor or mediocre guides and the hunt has been a failure. I have, however, employed four wonderful guides.

Jim Budge in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, knows all about the American elk (Wapiti) and antelope (Prong Buck). Curley Philips in British Columbia knows all about the five different game animals of that province. Johnnie Moyea, an Indian in Alberta, knows what a grizzly bear and mountain sheep (*ovis canadensis*) are going to

Hunting on Kenai Peninsula

do before the animal itself. And Andy Simonds of Alaska loves to study and take pictures of the white sheep and great herds of moose on the Kenai Peninsula. These men I have lived with in the wilderness and I declare that they are not only wonderful companions but geniuses in their profession.

They have made my hunting trips safe, comfortable, pleasant, and taken me into the midst of the game where I could study and photograph the various animals. Finally they have given me the opportunity to select and shoot a worth while trophy of nearly all the big game found in America. A few examples will show the phenomenal ability of these men.

When I pointed out a small moving object on a side hill nearly three miles away, Jim Budge could hardly tell what

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

it was. As it came towards us we saw it was an antelope. Continuing on its course it soon disappeared in the hills to our left. Jim said that buck has a bunch of does close by. He hustled over a couple of hills leaving me to tie the horses.

He soon returned for me and as we approached the second hill Jim told me that the buck and his fifteen does and fawns were just over the top. When we peeked over, the buck was leading his numerous family over the next rise. It was a long shot and my bullet landed in a gravel cliff which threw a bunch of rocks down right in front of the fleeing antelope. They turned and came running directly towards us though we were sitting in plain view. One hundred yards distant they stopped. Jim said, "The others will run away in just a few

❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧

seconds, leaving the buck standing alone." As the others departed I had a fine shot and his head is at the University Club.

Johnnie Moyea took me over the crest of the Rocky Mountains in Alberta where I crawled down a few yards and shot my bighorn sheep out of a band of six big rams. The others ran off down the mountain and Johnnie called to me to hustle up where he was hiding behind some rocks. He said they would circle the basin and pass over the top near us. Just before I could get my camera working (it was full of snow) the five rams went by not one hundred feet to our right.

Please consider next the wonderful piece of work that Andy Simonds did on my first white sheep, heretofore described. I had badly wounded the ram

but Andy did not follow him. Instead we waited until he had walked over the next mountain then we started in the opposite direction, circled two mountains, and waited for the ram to come to us. He could have gone any place in that one hundred square miles of mountains in Alaska. Or he could have been traveling a mile higher up or a mile lower down the mountain we were on. However, he soon came walking towards us neither higher up nor lower than Andy had guessed him. Such work is not that of a mere hunter, but of a wonderful guide. I hope hereafter, my dear sister, that you will fully understand what I mean when I describe some future trip as being successful because I had a good guide.

Your inquisitive husband may think it strange that we got no caribou on this

(79)



❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧

trip. Both Ed and I rather hoped we might see some of these fine animals as either Hornady (American Natural History, Vol. 11, p. 93) or Madison Grant in one of their books speak of caribou on Kenai Peninsula. We did see one or two old shed caribou horns, but Andy Simonds, who has hunted all over this territory for twenty years, has never seen a living caribou around here, though he knows them well in other parts of Alaska. Nobody seems to know just why or when they left or became extinct on the Kenai. Possibly this took place when the moose became so numerous.

We were told that fifty years ago there were very few moose. The King's County Argonauts have left records regarding their difficulty of finding any moose. They searched all over the Peninsula for gold and their sufferings would have been

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

much less had five to ten thousand moose been wandering about as is the case to-day. Around the camp fire at night we discussed these questions and our men seemed to think one explanation might be as follows:

The big gray timber wolf might have flourished on the rather small Alaska Caribou and then left the country or starved when there were no more caribou and only a few moose. Besides, a full grown moose is too big for a wolf to kill easily and calves would be rather scarce then. When the wolves had gone (there are a few now in the extreme southern part), the moose began to thrive in this moose paradise, where climatic conditions are exactly to his liking, and he finds all the food he eats in quantity.

He roams the mountains, hills, ridges,

Hunting on Kenai Peninsula

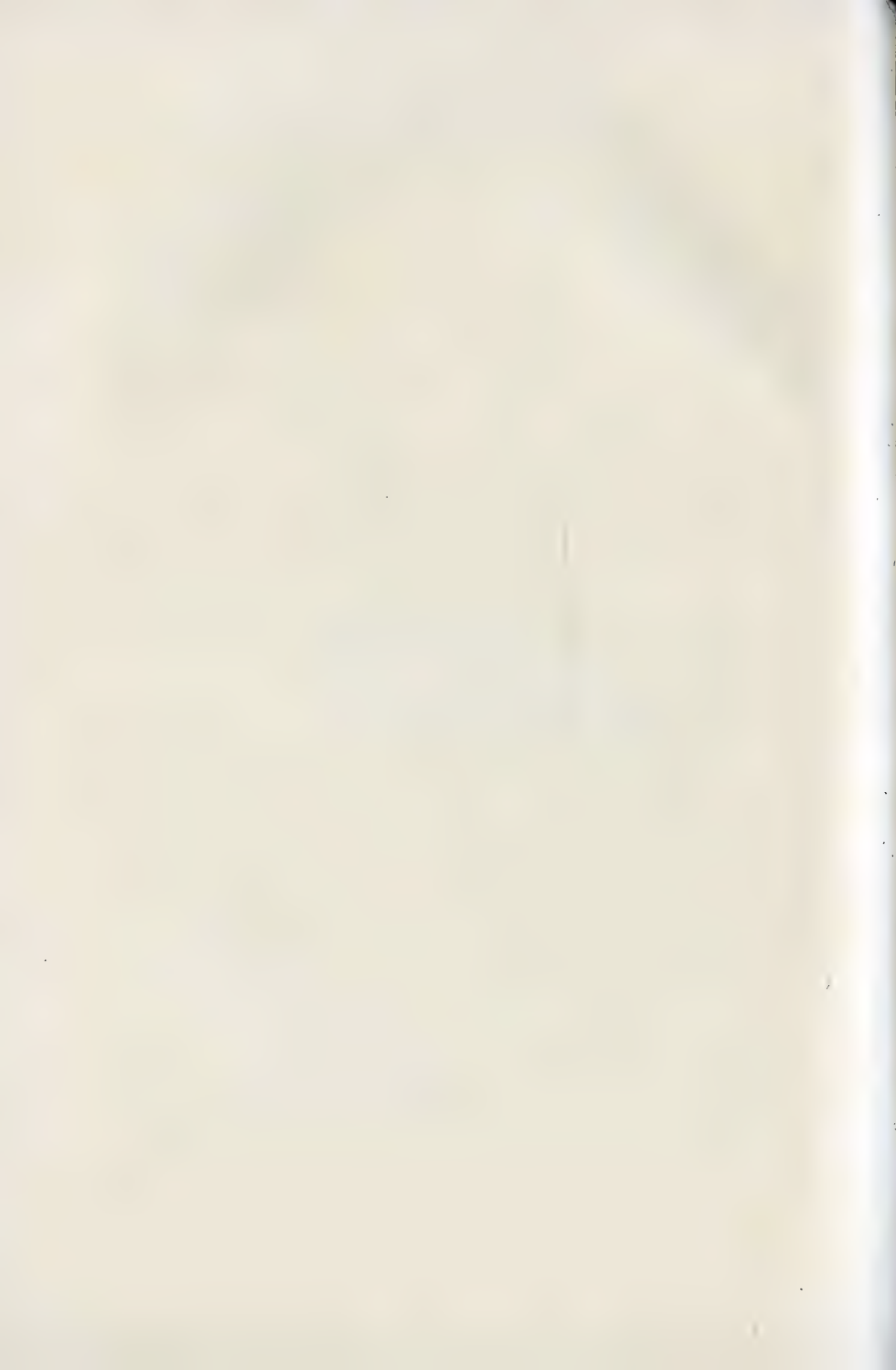
timber, swamps and lakes, king of all he surveys, except when a few hunters, each fall, silently appear to select a trophy and as quietly disappear. There were only four such heads taken this year, our party and another.

The natives and settlers are allowed to kill a moose for winter meat, but they get theirs on the outskirts near their homes and rarely disturb the big herds of the interior. So I believe the great herds of moose are a rather recent acquisition of the Kenai Peninsula and should flourish there for generations to come with the present governmental protection.

The wonderful white sheep should also flourish by the same protection and especially because of their keenness of sight, fleetness of foot and ability to exist high up among the glaciers and rug-



Antelope (Prong Buck) (Page 78)



== Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ==

ged peaks, practically out of all reach of civilization.

I might add that if the government would permit each hunting party to kill one young moose for food some parties would not break the law. We needed such an animal, but Andy Simonds is conscientious in the performance of his duties and would not permit such a thing. True, we might have brought down to the moose country more than one sheep carcass, but it was a long carry and so we ate many rabbits.

I have now given you a general idea of my Kenai Peninsular hunt. There are many details which Walter and I shall desire to discuss further when next we meet: such questions as the big black bear feeding on moose carrion while all the other black bears seen were feeding on the great quantities of berries; we can

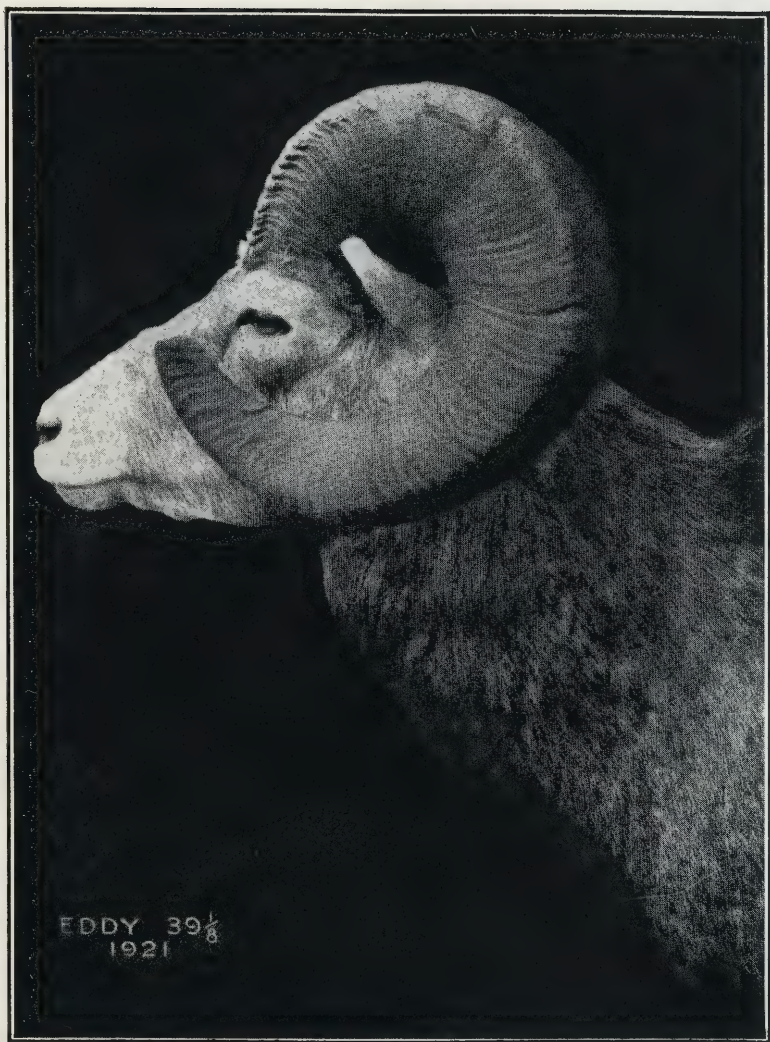
== Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ==

compare the white sheep (*ovis dalli*), with the big horn sheep (*ovis canadensis*); and the great increase of all game during the last ten years all over North America.

<



Big-Horn Sheep



Ovis Canadensis



OBSERVATIONS ON THE INCREASE OF BIG GAME IN NORTH AMERICA

It has been customary to close narratives of this character with dire predictions of the quick extinction of our wonderful game animals. A more correct and cheerful view is now possible for game is surely on the increase.

The reports of the game commission of the state of Pennsylvania testify to this fact even in the most populous section. Twenty years ago my Wyoming hunting license did not permit the shooting of a moose, nor did I see any, but now they are taken there during a short open season. The great increase of moose all over Canada from New Bruns-

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

wick to British Columbia is a striking example of this augmentation.

John Stover, our logging superintendent in Ontario, with whom I first hunted, has so testified. "Slim" Hawkey, a rancher and guide in Alberta, told me the same story during our 1921 hunt in that Province. In 1923 I saw many moose in Western British Columbia where formerly they were scarce. Charley Olesen explained this by saying that they were getting so plentiful further east that now they are drifting down into the valleys of the Pacific Slope. Here both Indians and white men formerly killed them easily in the deep snow but now they are much less disturbed.

The Mountain Goat is increasing rapidly in Western Canada and Alaska because they are disturbed only in the fall



Elk (Wapiti) on Olympic Peninsula

*Copyright by Asahel Curtis for the
Aberdeen Chamber of Commerce,
1924*



❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

by a few hunters. The white settler has a long climb up to shoot a goat and a long carry down to his home with the meat. Johnny Buck, an Indian living at Wrangell, said, "Indian no hunt any more, just fish and trap." He showed me Goat Gulch on the Stikine River where his tribe formerly obtained its winter's meat. They would drive the goats from the surrounding country into this gulch and there slaughter them. Now the Indians hang around the settlements, where they sell their fish and furs, and buy their food at the stores.

I have sat on wooded slopes in the Olympic mountains, only a few miles from Seattle, and watched numbers of Roosevelt Elk. These animals are interesting because they differ radically both in form and color from the Wyoming Elk. Grant W. Humes estimates there

(87)



❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

are over five thousand in the rather restricted area of the Olympic Peninsula. A few old bulls should be killed each fall under a license fee of One Hundred Dollars, no hunter being permitted to take more than one animal.

Of course, the protective laws of counties, states and nations have contributed to the preservation, but I believe canned meats, ham and bacon, have been the principal cause of this phenomenal increase. The miner, trapper, and settler prefer and can now easily get civilized food. It is their only form of luxury. I have never known a prospector, guide, or frontiersman who did not prefer such food to wild meat. No Indian will leave the railroad or steamboat landing to chase game once he has tasted store food.

Whenever my camps have been well

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

supplied with provisions the men have been willing to bring in parts of the game I have shot to satisfy my desires, but it has taken some urging to get them to pack in any quantity of meat, at least until our supplies were nearly exhausted. This fall our men started right in to clean up the ham and bacon. They nearly finished a ten-pound ham at one meal.

People who live near the great herds of Elk in Wyoming, the advance settlers and Indians of Canada, and Alaska, seldom kill one pound of game in the fall more than is necessary to carry them through the winter. As spring approaches they are generally compelled to make a trip to the nearest town.

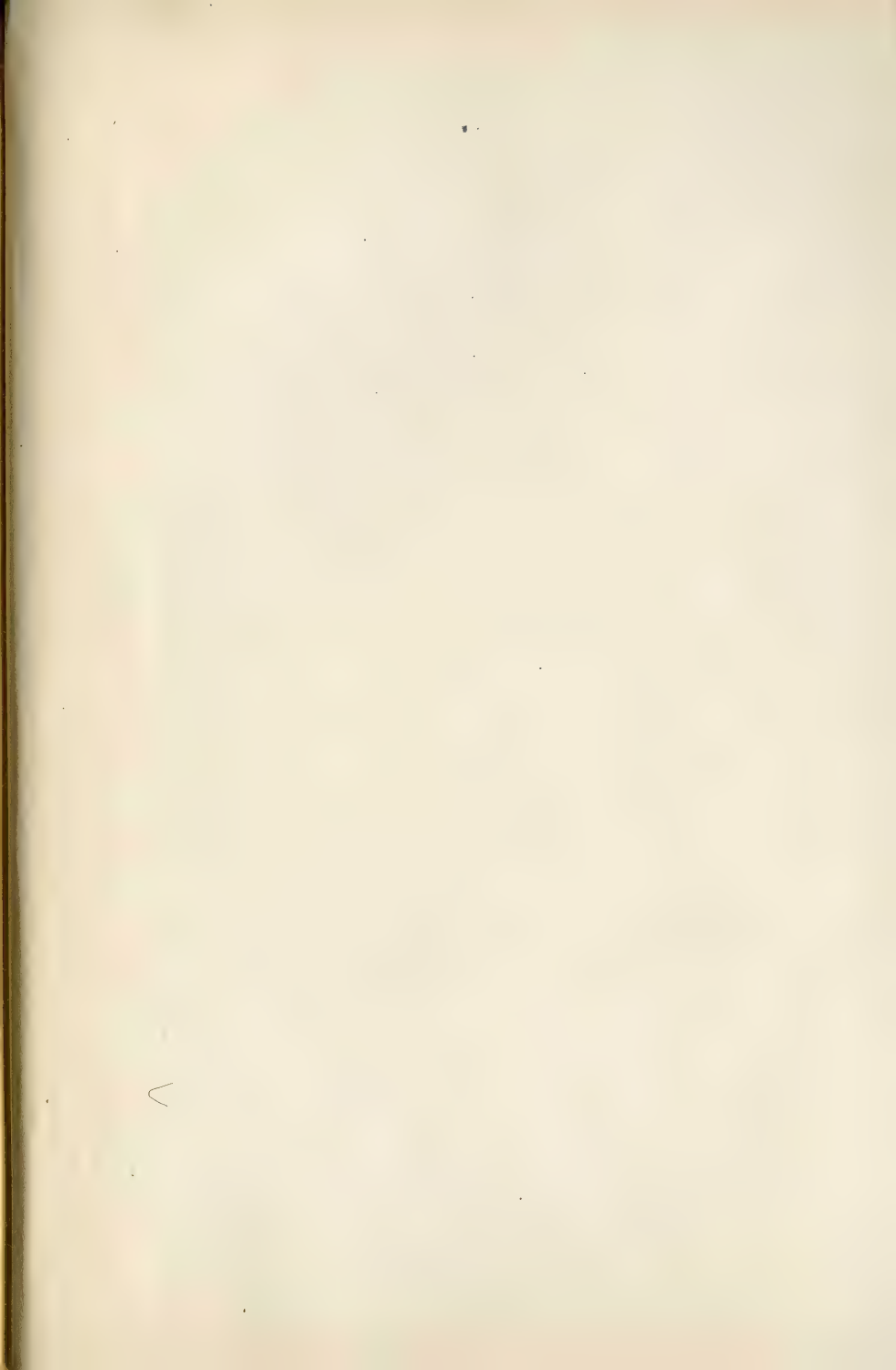
There is a case where game is decreasing, which strengthens my argument. On that far-flung land known as the

❧❧ Hunting on Kenai Peninsula ❧❧

Alaska Peninsula, commercial foods are costly and difficult to obtain, consequently the caribou are gradually being killed off by the natives.

It is my belief that if ham, bacon, and canned food had been as easily obtained fifty or seventy-five years ago as it is today, the American Bison or Buffalo and other so-called extinct animals would now be roaming the vacant spaces in numbers.

Thus my observations as a "dude" hunter, and, I may say also as a lumberman, lead me to believe that the preservation of our game animals is not in jeopardy; that game laws, and commercial foods insure good hunting in remote places to future generations.





✓

